17. Smt. Malvika Singh

18. Shri H.S. Hanspal

Memory sign for site of battle of plassey

1519. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two hundred and fifty years later, the site of the Battle of Plassey waits for a sign of memory as there is nothing else but a plaque set up by the British Government to mark the event;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the tourists who come there look for basic facilities such as eateries, toilets, etc. but return disappointed; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take to develop the site?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Development and promotion of tourism is undertaken primarily by the State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations for tourism related projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them under schemes for Product/ Infrastructure Developmen of Circuits/Destinations and Assistance to Large Revenue Generating Projects. Project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territories that are complete in all respect are examined as per scheme guidelines and sanctioned on the basis of inter-se priority and funds released subject to availability under the respective head.

Destination Plassey was prioritized for the year 2006-07. However, the project proposal received from the State Government of West Bengal was not as per the guidelines hence, was not sanctioned.

However, an amount of Rs. 2639.45 lakh has been sanctioned in the year 2006-07 for tourism related projects for the State of West Bengal.

Care of world heritage sites by ASI

1520. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that while Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is taking care of 6,000 monuments, out of which only 26 are World Heritage Sites as compared to 41 in Italy and 30 in France;

(b) if so, whether it is attributable due to paucity of funds or lack of skilled and technical staff, or any other specific cause; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to overcome these hurdles and the prospective national heritage becomes more comprehensive?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The Archaeological Survey of India takes care of 3667 monuments and sites of national importance. There are 26 World Heritage Sites in India, as compared to 41 in Italy and 30 in France.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. Sites are inscribed in the World Heritage List in accordance with the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Committee. Under the present guidelines, a State Party can submit a maximum of only two nominations per year for World Heritage Status of which one site must be a natural site.

For 2007, India has proposed inclusion of Red Fort, Delhi as a World Heritage Site. In addition, India has submitted a tentative list proposing 19 cultural and natural sites for their future inclusion in the World Heritage List.

Financial package to RRBs

1521. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Regional Rural Banks have requested Government to provide a one-time financial package of Rs. 2,674 crores to wipe out their accumulated loans;

(b) whether it is a fact that 40 Regional rural Banks have a regularized net worth;

(c) if so, whether a concrete strategy has been developed to help the 40 Regional Rural Banks;

(d) what are the reasons for Government in neglecting the RRBs; and